India

FOR THE

No. 204. New Series.] No. 298. Old Series.] WEEK ENDING FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1901. [Registered as a Newspaper. | Price...... 2d. By Post, 2½d.

Notes and News 253
"Prosperous" British India 256
Our London Letter 257
Chronicle of the Week 258
Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji on "The Condition of India" 259
The Bombay Land Revenue Amendment Act: London Indian Society's Conference... 259
Text of Memorial Adopted 261
Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji in Scotland 262
The Indian Famine Commission and the Famine Union 263
Advertisements 264

NOTES AND NEWS.

THERE is still hardly anything fresh in the Viceroy's famine telegram (November 23):—

Position remains much as before. Prospects bad in South Punjab, where, however, test works have not been started yet, and in Rajputana. In part of Bombay, Baroda, Central Provinces, and Central India, spring crops' prospects are poor, owing to deficient rainfall, but autumn crops are expected to be not much below the average, except in the case of Gujerat, where they are poor. Rain has fallen during the week over Madras Presidency, Central Provinces (east), deltaic Bengal, Cachar, and Burma. Numbers in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 53,000; Bombay Native States, 15,000; Baroda, 27,000; Mysore, 2,000. Total, 97,000.

The number on relief are reduced from 112,000 to 97,000—by 15,000. In the district most seriously threatened—South Punjab and Rajputana—the only comfort available lies in the fact that the test works contemplated have not yet been commenced; but unhappily the delay may possibly enough be ascribed to causes other than the actual needs of the people. We can only wait and see; but it is earnestly to be hoped that the needs of the people are the sole determining consideration. In other wide districts the spring crops are admitted to be "poor," for want of rain, especially in Gujerat, which has been desolated, and the anticipations of the autumn crops are expressed in very chastened terms. There is really nothing yet to lift the gloom from the immediate future.

Last Sunday, Mr. Romesh Dutt, C.I.E., addressed a largely attended meeting at Tunbridge Wells on the present situation in India. He explained that the tourist in India who visited the historic towns and the fine hill stations and the busy seats of Government seldom came in contact with the silent millions who lived in their villages, and saw little of the life of the people. The great continent of India was now passing through an economic crisis graver than the military crisis of 1857. The causes of the distress and poverty of India at the present day were the decline of her industries, the heavy assessment of the land, and the continuous drain of something like one-half of the revenues of India, annually remitted out of India. The most industrious and prosperous people in the world would, under such circumstances, soon know the horrors of famine. The lecturer was listened to with profound interest, and at the close of the lecture further explained the state of things in India in reply to numerous questions from the audience. In the evening, Mr. Dutt addressed a congregation at the Free Church of Tunbridge Wells on the subject of "Theism in Ancient India," and read passages from the Upanishads and other Hindu scriptures.

On December 10 Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will address the Dulwich Liberal and Radical Association, at 136, Lordship Lane, East Dulwich, at 8.30 in the evening.

The question of agricultural banks is moving slowly; still it is moving. The committee that sat on the subject for six weeks at Simla has issued its report, and the Allahabad correspondent of the "Times" (November 26) has sent over a summary of the results. The committee prefers the title "co-operative credit societies" to the title "banks." Well, well; but to get to business. The committee thinks "that the efforts of the Government should not be limited to the establishment of purely agricultural societies," but that, after the model of the earliest Italian co-operative banks, "an endeavour should be made to encourage the formation in India of urban societies working on co-operative lines." These would "meet an existing want in providing a medium somewhat more profitable than the Post Office Savings Bank for the accumulation of the savings of clerks and artisans," and they would loan capital to village societies. The correspondent continues:—

If this result could be attained the necessity of Government aid to rural societies would be diminished, while the village societies on their side would play the part of agents of the urban society and so meet the difficulty of acquiring local knowledge, which is at present the main obstacle to the spread of mofussil banking, and would furnish a secure and profitable investment for the surplus funds of urban societies.

The fresh complication of machinery, by the introduction of the urban element, beyond the suggestions of the Famine Commission, interposes enlarged difficulties, while aiding the careful elimination of the Government. The Poona scheme of 1882, whose history was written by Sir William Wedderburn in "The Skeleton at the (Jubilee) Feast," had no urban machinery like that now proposed; but "the village money-lenders were prepared to co-operate, and the Native bankers were ready to provide capital." Are these aids no longer available?

The process of institution is left in the vague. It must vary, it is thought, with local conditions and circumstances; so the committee advise no attempt to follow European examples closely, or to seek uniformity throughout India. As to liability, "the committee enter into considerable detail and advocate the formation of societies on a share basis with limited liability for urban needs, while favouring institutions with unlimited liability without shares for rural districts." "Government aid should be limited to Rs.2,000, or half the amount actually subscribed for share capital or deposits"—a tolerably safe position. With limited liability, these loans "would be repayable with interest after two years," except when some calamitous reason, such as famine, presses. With unlimited liability, "advances would be made under taccavi rules." Thrift is to be encouraged by the exemption of the shares and deposits of members of a registered society, up to a certain small amount (say Rs.100), from attachment of any description, whether by a court of law or by a revenue officer. The registrar—a deputy-commissioner, collector, or judge—is to be vested with "very extensive powers of inspection and control." And the Committee recommend "the formation of reserve funds by setting aside a quarter of the net profits annually with a view to the reduction of the rate of interest on loans made to members, such rate never to exceed 12½ per cent." The original simplicity of the organisation seems to be disappearing, and the swathes of red-tape are being carefully rolled about the project.

Where the association is on a share basis with limited liability, the Committee would not insist on any restrictions of the purposes for which loans should be made. In the case of societies without a share capital, the Committee would grant loans and advances for the following purposes only:—

(1) for purposes industrially or agriculturally productive—such as the purchase of seed, cattle, agricultural or industrial implements, raw material for manufactures, or farm improvements, including buildings; (2) for the liquidation of debts due by a member prior to his election, if an arrangement can be made whereby the borrower's total indebtedness is brought within his powers of repayment within a reasonable period; (3) for payment of rent or revenue.

The Committee offer no objection to loans for expenses connected with marriages and other domestic occurrences, "provided the borrower has had a deposit account for the

past three years and the amount so lent does not exceed 50 per cent. of the annual average of his deposit account." This proviso may not prove popular, but at any rate it is salutary. We shall be glad to see the full report of the Committee, and hope it will be available in this country without undue delay.

Mr. Lloyd George, we are surprised to observe, is reported to have stated in a speech at Birkenhead (November 21) that "India, Egypt, and the Central Provinces of Africa were costing us a great deal of money." It may be a slip of the tongue, or a slip of the pen, but so far as India is concerned such a statement ought not to pass without challenge. What is this "great deal of money" expended on? And how much is it? We should be interested to learn what single service is performed by Great Britain for India which is not paid for by India. India pays for her military defence, her military equipment, our military expeditions—and that sorely against her will and judgment—down to the last pice. India pays for her civil government and administration, and that, too, so far as the British element is concerned, at the highest rates ever known in the history of political government. India pays for the India Office in Whitehall from top to bottom—from the salary of the Secretary of State down to the wages of the humblest charwoman. It would be vastly nearer the truth to say that Great Britain costs India "a great deal of money." The Home Government has just acknowledged a yearly overcharge of over a quarter of a million sterling (£257,000); but it shrinks from paying arrears, which soon mount up to a very round sum—indeed, two years' arrears would equal one Mansion House Fund for an unparalleled famine. And then there is the "drain" of uncounted millions.

The latest article by the "Times" special correspondent in India on the new Frontier Province contains several disquieting elements, after full allowance is made for official influence upon his views. He speaks of "the grave inconvenience of the present situation" along the Durand boundary, and asserts that "we are quite unable, and in fact do not aspire, to carry out our responsibility." Afghans on the one side indulge in private war with Waziris and Afridis on the other side, and "in Waziristan the balance of raiding is probably on the side of the Waziris and Mahsuds, who raid on every opportunity into the Afghan valleys of Birmal and Khost." Indeed, "the result is a complete state of insecurity along the whole frontier from Shorawak, near Quetta, to Bajaur." This looks rather serious. But why have we not heard of all this before? What are the opportunities of information open to the correspondent? Has the Amir made complaint to the Government of India? The prospect is indicated in these words:—

> For this discreditable state of things the Durand policy, it is alleged, is solely responsible, and it can never be remedied until we make those costly and dangerous advances which every prudent statesman desires for as long as possible to postpone.

One cannot but suspect that the article is unduly alarmist; but, of course, everything depends on facts that are not, so far as we are aware, known in this country. It does seem a pitiful inconsequence to undertake difficult responsibilities and then not even aspire to carry them out. The probability of our being "compelled" to make further advances was easily foreseen. But, after all, we should think these frontier tribes might maul each other very considerably without attracting attention either at Kabul or at Calcutta.

However, while the correspondent admits that at present "deliberate advances on a large scale are out of the question," he says "it may be doubted whether the policy inaugurated with the elimination of the Punjab will not be more aggressive . . . . than has hitherto been the case." Now the thing is done and settled, it is safe to let us know here that the policy of the new Province will likely enough be "more aggressive." The suggestion is nothing new to us; we always regretted the withdrawal of the restraining judgment and experience of the Punjab. The correspondent thinks we are tolerably safe with Lord Curzon and Colonel Deane, but these will have successors, with whom we may or may not be safe. "The permanent elements of the situation," however, "are not quite so reassuring." The difficulty seems to be conceived to lie in the action of "the Mullahs and their fanatical followers, the budmashes and turbulent outlaws." The correspondent accepts the conventional view of these men, but would there not be more profit, as Sir W. W. Hunter suggested, in trying to understand them? How does this correspondent know that they are "not irreconcilable," that they "do not cherish a national idea of independence," that they "are not burghers struggling to be free"? There is not a little evidence against him. In any case, can't we let them alone? The correspondent writes, rather unadvisedly perhaps (from the official point of view), but no doubt truly:—

> Experience has shown that in frontier affairs an ordinary Viceroy is entirely in the hands of a powerful Commander-in-Chief. More permanent opposition is needed if the disastrous events of the last decade are not to be repeated with still more disastrous results.

Under all this we seem to feel a repetition of the pressure for an extension of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty, and we note that Lord Curzon's personal knowledge of the frontier is absurdly emphasised and repeated "ad nauseam." The political texture of the article, however, is raw throughout.

The quiet of Afghanistan does not seem to be disturbed by the active wishes of a part of the Russian press for petty intermeddling. For all we have heard of the recent progress of Russia in the East, the "Bourse Gazette" of St. Petersburg, according to a telegram in the "Times" (November 26), points out that any development of the commercial relations between Russia and Southern Asia is impossible because of the absence of Russian agents in India and Afghanistan. It is not so very long since we heard of "commercial" agents of Russia in Bombay, and heard of them with complacency. Are these, then, not making their influence felt in the "development of commercial relations"? If there are none in Afghanistan, we dare say that is because the Amir imagines that he and his people can get along more comfortably without them: the policy of Afghanistan is to look after what Afghanistan rightly or wrongly considers its own interests, not the interests of Russia, or of any other country. "The absence of such agents," the "Bourse Gazette" asserts, "has always exercised a harmful influence on Asiatic policy by compelling Russia to make large concessions to reassure the suspicious British"; and it concludes "that the question which for the moment stands in most urgent need of an immediate solution is the appointment of a Russian diplomatic representative at Kabul." Just so: a "diplomatic" representative, without even the traditional veil of the blessed word "commercial." Here is mischief posing as innocence—but in a conspicuously futile fashion. As if the trade with Afghanistan were vital to Russia, with the whole world open to her enterprise!

We like the union of firmness and conciliation in the tone of Lord Curzon's reported addresses to various groups of deputationists who have welcomed him to Burma. At Kindat he laid emphasis on suppression of dacoities and general lawlessness, on the peace and prosperity exhibited in consequence, and on the development of improved communications and better sanitation. It is well to enforce these necessary changes by reference to the accruing advantages to everybody concerned. It should also do good to the chiefs of the Chin tribes, whom he met at Kalewa, to have let the tribesmen know that their behaviour should be judged by the attitude of their chiefs, the Government not interfering with their internal affairs except in the supreme interest of law and order. The census was perhaps an unnecessary risk of tribal excitement; but, now that it has passed over quietly, the assurance that "the object of the Government was to know their numbers in order to become conscious of the extent of their claims" will tend to a confirmation of comfortable relations. On the Chins also the Viceroy impressed the intolerableness of disorder and the advantages of peace and of internal development. He left them, apparently, in no doubt of the earnest intention of the Government to befriend them now and always.

The "Times" (November 23) summarises briefly the administrative work of the first six months of the new Government under Mr. Krishna Murti, C.I.E.—the great

grandson of Purneah—in Mysore. The financial situation, which was showing weakness, has been strengthened by the imposition of a tighter grip upon the spending departments: no officials shall henceforth authorise expenditure "on the expectation of Government sanction being subsequently obtained." Similarly, "a further reform, requiring the Budget estimates of the various departments and the provinces to be passed before the beginning of the official year, not only provides the Government with full knowledge of all intended expenditure, but also shows the various heads of departments what sums are allotted to them and beyond which they must not go." It does seem extraordinary that such a loose practice should have waited till now for correction. Again, unnecessary appointments have been abolished—all unnecessary appointments, it is to be hoped. Much expenditure has been involved in the fight with the plague, which now seems to be nearly overpowered. The fight with famine is taking the form of further irrigation works—a wise measure of prevention. The provision of the transport corps for Imperial service, offered in 1897, has been delayed by the lowness of the exchequer; but loyalty obliges, and the process of organisation is getting well forward. We trust that Mr. Murti will keep well in view the importance of maintaining the high credit of Mysore for exemplary government in a Native State. The eyes of all India—and not a few European eyes—are upon him.

A very interesting meeting was held at the Indian Congress Hall, Durban, on October 15, when Mr. M. K. Gandhi, barrister-at-law, was presented with addresses from the Indian community generally, from colonial-born and English-speaking Indians, and from the Hindu community, and was loaded with a variety of appreciative gifts, on the occasion of his return to India on private business. The general Indian address expressed "the deep sense of gratitude we entertain towards you for the valuable services you have so untiringly and cheerfully rendered, and the exemplary self-sacrifice you have ever willingly undergone to watch and further the interests of your fellow-countrymen since your arrival in the Colony over eight years ago." It recognises his "high ideals" and his "unflinching devotion to duty." The speakers emphasised his earnest endeavours "to allay the feelings between the white and coloured people." Mr. Koch, a magistrate, "wished they had a thousand Gandhis appearing at the Bar." The "Natal Mercury" refers editorially to the meeting as affording "striking testimony of the general esteem in which Mr. Gandhi is held by both the European and Indian community." And, to its high credit, it proceeds thus:—

Mr. Gandhi has won the position he holds to-day, especially among the European community, by sheer merit and ability. He has proved himself a gentleman in word and deed, and in his profession he has won the respect of both Bench and Bar as much by his legal attainments as by his high principles of conduct. . . . . Mr. Gandhi has represented his countrymen in an extremely able manner, and his services have been of material advantage in dealing with many questions affecting the Indian population. He will certainly be missed, and we can only hope that, should he elect not to return to Natal, he will meet in India with the success his abilities as a lawyer and his excellent parts as a gentleman deserve.

Whatever may be the differences between the Indian and the Anglo-Indian newspapers, and however much they may disagree, they are perfectly united in resisting the restrictions on Indians which have been introduced in many British colonies. The "Times of India" opened its columns to complaints against the legislation of Natal. Now, the "Englishman" enters a strong protest against the recently passed Act of the Australian Commonwealth, by which the employment of coloured labour on mail steamers is forbidden. In fact, as it says, two of the first things the new Commonwealth has done are to slight the Imperial factor by thus excluding from mail steamers their Indian fellow-subjects, and to produce a tariff which is expected to tell severely against Indian tea. The "Pioneer" also protests, and points out that Indian sailors, as has already been suggested, may become valuable recruits to the British navy.

Dr. A. H. Church, F.R.S., has published a Supplement to his important work, "Food-grains of India," containing certain analyses that he had made since the volume was issued in 1886. He now presents the slow and laborious results of the examination of 21 different kinds of grains or seeds, mostly scarcity or famine foods. The results, after all, are to be regarded only as approximate, but they are substantially true in comparison with one another. This is not the place for technical comment on the methods pursued or on the individual cases; it is enough to note that the work is being done, and to wish that there was more of it. It is noteworthy that popular opinion has generally anticipated scientific decision. A peculiar black glutinous rice from Burma ("oryza sativa"), for example, "is regarded by Native opinion in Burma as more nourishing than the ordinary kinds of rice"; and Dr. Church says: "The nutrient-ratio is here 1 : 8.6, the nutrient-value 88, while the corresponding average numbers for Indian rices are respectively 1 : 10.8 and 86." The Burmese evidently knows to a fraction what is best for him. The seeds of the vetchling "lathyrus sativus," known under a score of local names, occasionally produce toxic effects, inducing paralysis in horses and bullocks, as well as in man by free use; but it is suggested that this dangerous characteristic may be obviated by proper cooking. The interest of the Supplement, however, is almost wholly scientific, though the results ought to have practical effects in capable executive hands.

The case of Hoff v. the Editor and Printer of the "Amrita Bazar Patrika" has produced a strong impression, to which the "Friend of India" gives utterance, that in one important respect the Indian law of libel requires amendment. It will be remembered that the libel appeared in a Calcutta paper, but nevertheless the case was tried at Cawnpore, where the Editor was convicted, though the conviction was ultimately set aside on appeal. In this case the plaintiff had some excuse for choosing Cawnpore as the place of trial, but he need not have had any. It is apparently open to the prosecutor to choose any place in India in which a copy of the paper has been sold and read as the place in which the trial shall take place, and the editor can be dragged on a criminal charge to the other end of the country. The "Friend of India" insists that prosecutions for libel should be tried where the newspaper's place of business is situated.

Within the Nizam's dominions a British non-commissioned officer recently purchased some land. His wife went over with some cook-boys to evict the tenant in possession, with the result that in the end she and her husband were roughly handled. Thereupon it was discovered that a clause in the treaty dated September 1, 1798, between the East India Company and the Nizam ran thus: "Nor shall any Europeans whatever be admitted into the service of the State, nor be permitted to remain within its territories, without the knowledge and consent of the Company's Government." The land in question being outside of cantonment limits evidently could not be occupied by Europeans if this clause were enforced. Naturally, the "Times of India," representing the views of the European community, is indignant at what it considers virtually a new order—the more so as it emanates from the Government of India. It asks how the gold-fields of Mysore, or even the coal mines of Hyderabad could have been developed under such restrictions. But possibly the Government are wise to prefer the peace of the country to its unauthorised exploitation.

Remittances on India for 60 lakhs were on Wednesday offered for tender by the India Council, and applications amounting to Rs.12,39,15,000 were received at prices ranging from 1s. 3d. and 31-32nds to 1s. 4d. and 1-32nd. The following amounts were allotted—viz., in bills Rs.30,54,000 on Calcutta and Rs. 8,23,000 on Madras at an average of 1s. 3.969d., and Rs.20,23,000 on Bombay at an average of 1s. 3.972d., and in telegraphic transfers Rs.1,00,000 on Bombay at an average of 1s. 4.031d. Tenders for bills at 1s. 3d. and 31-32nds will receive about 4 per cent., and above in full, and for transfers at 1s. 4d. and 1-32nd in full. Later the Council sold bills for Rs.60,000 on Bombay and Rs.10,000 on Calcutta at 1s. 4d. Last week remittances for Rs.60,20,793 were disposed of for £401,129, making the amount sold from April 1 to Tuesday night Rs.13,57,09,710, producing £9,017,697. Next week 60 lakhs will again be offered.

"PROSPEROUS" BRITISH INDIA. *

WHEN in the House of Commons Lord George Hamilton boasted of the prosperity of India, he must have expected an immediate reply. The point was of the utmost importance; and both he and his predecessor had treated it as decisive. Sir Henry Fowler has declared that the test by which our rule must be judged is the answer to the question whether or no it has promoted the general prosperity of the people of India; while Lord George Hamilton has declared that if India has retrograded in material prosperity, we stand self-condemned, and ought no longer to be entrusted with the control of the country. The challenge was given plainly enough in the House of Commons on the occasion of the last Indian debate; yet no one in the House was found to take it up. The old champions of India in that assembly have passed away, and we still wait for those who shall take their place. But that which was not done in the House of Commons has been essayed outside; and in a book of over six hundred pages Mr. William Digby sets himself to show from official documents, some of which have never before been accessible to the public, that India is not prosperous, and is becoming less so as the years pass on. The question is vital. On the answer depends by the admission of two great defenders of our rule the justification of our Indian Empire. On it depends the happiness of three hundred millions of our fellow subjects. Lord George Hamilton declared that he could find no facts, figures, or evidence to support the assertion that we were bleeding India. Here are facts, figures, and evidence in plenty. Its value may be open to discussion. But at least it cannot be said that those who insist on the prosperity—the increasing prosperity—of India have no case to answer.

The book is, indeed, a very mine of facts, driven home by a series of striking diagrams. There is, perhaps, a somewhat too controversial tone, when facts and figures might have been left to speak for themselves with more effect. Moreover, owing to the want of unquestioned records in the times before our rule was established, the crucial point—the decreasing prosperity of the country—has to be to some extent proved indirectly. Mr. Digby has an easy task in showing that as compared with other countries, India, far from being prosperous, is terribly poor, and that even the necessary minimum of subsistence is scarcely reached by great numbers. To show that this poverty has been continually deepening is much more difficult; but even here there is a considerable quantity of evidence pointing in one direction. And besides this question of material prosperity, the answer to which forms the main purpose of the book, other subjects necessarily arise from time to time. The occupation of nearly all the high posts in India by foreigners is a great material loss, but it is also a great moral damage. India loses, not only material wealth, but the fostering of generous ambition and the excitement of high enterprise. "We," wrote Mr. Thackeray, an eminent civilian of the early nineteenth century, "do not want generals, statesmen, and legislators; we want industrious husbandmen." And the advice has been faithfully followed. Mr. Digby points out that even the era of confusion before the consolidation of the British power had certain advantages. It was a time in which all things were possible; when the strong could fight their way to greatness, and all men could find a career suited to their capacity; a time, in fact, when life was more full and more interesting than it has ever been under our rule of law. In comparing the happiness of Indians in the two eras, this must not be left out of account.

As has been already said, the poverty of India absolutely and relatively to other countries is easily established. There is in India an extraordinary absence of accumulated wealth. The inherited wealth in Great Britain is £300 per head; in India it is estimated at 18s. 8d. per head. We hear much of the money-lenders, but if one money-lender be allowed for each village, then the average wealth of each would only amount to £360 if all that was owing to them was repaid, while in that case 80 per cent. of the people would be left without any acquired or inherited wealth at all. Nor must it be forgotten that the money-lender has only a secondary claim on the land mortgaged to him. The first claim always belongs to the State. But as we probe the matter further the poverty deepens. In 1880, Sir William Hunter estimated that 40,000,000 of the people were insufficiently fed. And according to an estimate of the "Pioneer" in 1893, a hundred million are living in extreme poverty. Of the Rs.30 or £2 a year needed for bare subsistence, Mr. Digby estimates that only Rs.17 or £1 2s. 8d. is forthcoming. But this is the average, and as some have more others must have less. 230,000,000 have only 12s. a year each, and out of this 2s. 6d. at least has to be paid in taxation. And yet men are found to speak of India as lightly taxed, as if there could be any comparison between the taxes raised from the superfluous wealth of Europe and those wrung from the starvation of India.

In the confidential reports to the Government of India some very striking evidence of the poverty of the people is collected. Thus Mr. Crooke, Collector of Etah in the North-West Provinces—a district containing 1,739 square miles, and a population of 756,528—came to the conclusion that a family of cultivators would have to live on less than Rs.46 per annum, while at the prices then (1888) prevailing, Mr. Digby believes that food and clothing, even if the family only consisted of four persons, would cost Rs.51. Through the want of warm clothing, the women and children have in the cold weather to sleep in the afternoon and early hours of the night, while from midnight to dawn they "cower over a fire of rubbish in the yard of the dwelling-house." As regards Bombay, Mr. Crawford declared to the Famine Commission that on the slopes and spurs of the Sahyadris "there is not a single monsoon, however favourable, in which the people do not suffer without a murmur most of the hardships incidental to a famine." In South Konkan, the labourer "rarely" suffers from a deficiency of food. According to Mr. Cumine the greater portion of the Ghat cultivators cannot get enough to allay hunger in the hot weather.

As to the question whether India is becoming poorer, Mr. Digby gives us a list of the famines of the nineteenth century. Taking the most important, there were in the first quarter five famines, extending over only a small area, and accompanied by slight loss of life; in the second, there were two; in the third, six famines, with a loss of five millions of lives; and in the fourth eighteen famines, four being the most terrible ever known. In the last ten years the "Lancet" estimates the loss of life due to famine and famine disease at nineteen millions. The famine of 1897 affected thirteen provinces, and that of 1900 nine. In the first half of the century not one famine affected as many as four provinces.

Can it be pretended that this increase in the number and intensity of famines is due to some deterioration in the climate? Mr. Digby attributes it to the drain, and brings together much evidence bearing on that. He shows, for instance, that the net land-tax of British India, amounting to £15,602,176, is insufficient to cover the expenditure of the India Office in Europe. The Tribute paid by India to England is, indeed, nothing new. Unlike other conquerors who settled in the country, and if they fleeced the people, spent what they extorted among them, the English have been steadily remitting the wealth of India to England. Indeed some economists trace the industrial revolution which took place in England in the latter half of the eighteenth century to the pouring in of Indian wealth. It was the accumulation of capital thereby caused that made the factory system and the introduction of the steam-engine possible. But the tribute in the eighteenth century, though it may have borne a greater proportion to the wealth of England, was a small matter compared with the tribute paid throughout the nineteenth century.

It is impossible here to follow Mr. Digby throughout the vast masses of figures and the great number of tables with which he supports his contentions. He follows the destruction of Indian industries, and shows how little of the industrial wealth of India other than that arising from agriculture is left to the Indians. He gives us from an official "enquiry into the Economic Condition of the Agricultural and Labouring Classes in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, 1888" an analysis of farming accounts

* "'Prosperous' British India: A Revelation from Official Records." By William Digby, C.I.E. (London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1901.)

extending to many pages. Many other facts and statistics are taken from similar confidential enquiries in other Provinces. One small table shows the fall in the purchasing power of the rupee in five localities between the periods 1873-1877, and 1893-97, and the rise, but unfortunately the far from proportionate rise, of wages during the same time. It is also shown how poor a customer India is to us in consequence of her poverty. Finally, there are some interesting estimates of the income of the Indian people in the years 1850, 1882, and 1900. In the first year, a non-official estimate puts the average income at 2d. per head per day. In 1882, the income was officially estimated at 1½d. Mr. Digby estimates it in 1900 at ¾d. If these figures can be substantiated, his main contention is vindicated, and his task accomplished.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

Mr. Balfour's sudden illness has tended to freeze the current of political controversy. An important speech had been expected from the First Lord of the Treasury this week, but on the very eve of his promised appearance at Wolverhampton he was attacked by influenza and has since been confined to the house. The disappointment is the more severe because Mr. Balfour's lips have been sealed since the prorogation of Parliament. Had he spoken he must have had a good deal to say. He would have had to respond to Mr. Asquith's demand for a clear definition of Ministerial policy in South Africa, and, as leader of the House of Commons, he would also no doubt have taken the country into his confidence with regard to the reforms of procedure which the Government are said to be contemplating. More difficult than either of these duties might have been the task of supplying a plausible justification of Mr. Chamberlain's latest performance. Altogether, the speech that has not been delivered was perhaps the most interesting of the recess.

While everyone regrets that Mr. Balfour should have caught so inopportune a cold, it must be said that some of the Tory leader's admirers have been overdoing their expressions of sympathy. After all, a Balfourian sneeze is scarcely sufficient to obliterate one's recollection of a long record of Balfourian blunders. To say, as one of his tearful eulogists does, that under Mr. Balfour's leadership the House of Commons has gained in dignity and efficiency, is to talk sheer nonsense. It was under, and due to, Mr. Balfour's leadership that the police for the first time in history were employed to drag members of Parliament from their places and throw them into the street. Mr. Balfour is an amiable trifler, and even if his influenza should become chronic it would still be true that the House of Commons has never had a more incompetent leader. Let us, at least, reserve the application of the "De mortuis" principle for a more exigent provocation than a cold in Mr. Balfour's head.

Some surprise has been caused by Mr. Chamberlain's refusal to go to Wolverhampton in Mr. Balfour's place. The Colonial Secretary is a ready speaker, and under ordinary circumstances he might have been trusted to fill the gap at a moment's notice. At present, however, he is not in the best of health. Mr. Chamberlain, it is true, has announced that he is perfectly well, but the assurance should be taken with a pinch of salt. People who have lately been brought into contact with him have been struck by his nervous irritability. Moreover, the strain and stress of the last two years have left visible marks on the Colonial Secretary's physique, and it is notorious that he has been nursing his health for some time past with sedulous and altogether novel devotion. But apart from the state of his health, other reasons might easily be imagined for Mr. Chamberlain's reluctance to act as Mr. Balfour's understudy. He could scarcely speak at present without taking some notice of the furious outcry of his German critics, and with all his rashness Mr. Chamberlain is wise enough to know that for the future he had better give that particular hornets' nest a wide berth. Possibly, however, the true explanation of his unwonted coyness is that suggested by the local politicians—to the effect that Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Henry Fowler consider themselves bound by a tacit agreement never to invade each other's territory.

One abiding effect of the German outcry must be to complete Mr. Chamberlain's disqualification for the highest office in the Government. We in this country, of course, do not select our Ministers at the bidding of foreign Powers, but when a statesman has made himself ineligible in other ways the fact that he has likewise incurred the distrust of our allies must tell against him with enhanced force. There was a time when Mr. Chamberlain dreamed of being Secretary for Foreign Affairs, when he revealed and anticipated his ambition by advertising for a German or an American alliance, and when he exhibited his diplomatic tact by speaking of Russia and France in the terms which he is accustomed to employ towards Radical members below the gangway. That dream has perished, like so many other Chamberlain illusions; and if any preacher desires a text for a sermon or a moral for a peroration, here is one ready to his hand.

But for the rigour of the censorship in South Africa, we should probably never have heard of the absurd slanders against the British troops that have obtained credence on the Continent. Publicity prevents more evils than it creates, while, on the other hand, an unmeaning secrecy gives rise to every variety of sinister rumour. Mr. John Ellis's demand for "a stream of facts," which when it was first put forward earned for that gentleman the special scorn and condemnation of Mr. Chamberlain, is still the true remedy, and ought to be adopted without delay. Even in Russia the censorship is milder and more discriminating than the South African imitation. Our authorities not only censor all communications sent into the country, but also everything that comes out of it. The Russian authorities, as a rule, only supervise articles intended for home consumption. They are loftily indifferent to the character of the export trade. So long as the simple Russians are left uncorrupted the foreigner may read what he pleases.

Liberal unity is not likely to be promoted by Mr. Asquith's latest step. He has consented to be made an honorary member of the Liberal Imperialist League, a body which is avowedly sectional in its aims and constitution, and which, therefore, according to the tradition that has usually guided the conduct of front bench politicians, ought to derive no direct countenance from the leaders of the party. As Mr. Asquith rarely acts without due deliberation he has doubtless counted the probable consequences of his action. His record in connexion with the war has been peculiarly unhappy. He began by throwing ridicule on Mr. Morley's prediction that the outbreak of hostilities must lead to a policy of annexation, and one of his last proceedings before the prorogation of Parliament was to bestow an emphatic approval on the silliest and what has since proved to be the most futile of Mr. Chamberlain's schemes for ending the war by proclamation. It is difficult to say whether Mr. Asquith is being misled by Sir Edward Grey, or Sir Edward Grey by Mr. Asquith. One thing is certain, and that is that both are steadily drifting away from what Mr. Morley has called the main stream of Liberal feeling.

While his refractory lieutenants are losing their influence on public opinion, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's sterling qualities are gaining in popular appreciation every day. The result is visible in the growing confidence and authority with which the Liberal leader is investing his utterances. When Sir Henry first took up the Liberal leadership it was assumed—even, in some degree, by himself—that the appointment was a mere stop-gap. Neither Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman nor any other sensible man retains that delusion to-day. The leader of the Opposition has borne the heat and burden of the day, and very properly he has set his heart on the palm of victory. Most of the intrigues now in progress are due to the fact that Lord Rosebery's particular friends have begun to realise that Sir Henry is becoming a power in the country. Lord Rosebery himself, indeed, seems to have an inkling of the situation. He will probably find that his awakening has come too late.

"Ass," "fop," "cad," "don"—these are some of the choice epithets that have been offered as a solution of one of the minor mysteries of Mr. W. E. Henley's urbane essay on the personality of his dead friend, Robert Louis Stevenson. The novelist, we are told, was known among his

friends—save the mark!—by a "dread vocable" of three letters, which Mr. Henley expressly assures us he is too fastidious to repeat. None of the terms quoted do much credit to the intelligence of the Henleyan circle, and although that is scarcely an argument against their credibility one would fain hope that our modern schools for scandal are not altogether devoid of intelligence. Stevenson himself has told us that in his first literary experiments he loved to "play the sedulous ape." Here is a nickname of three letters invented by the victim himself—one, also, that carried a sting in its tail and hit off, aptly enough, that very note of mimicry which, according to Mr. Henley, was one of the characteristics of Stevenson's style.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

THURSDAY, November 21.—The "North German Gazette" contained a semi-official "communique" on the subject of the German agitation over Mr. Chamberlain's allusion in his Edinburgh speech to the doings of the German troops in France in 1870, in which the opinion was expressed that it would be illegitimate to extend to the English Government and people the "justifiable displeasure" excited by the expressions employed, outside Parliament, by a single Minister. The "North German Gazette" observed that the Edinburgh speech was "toned down" by Mr. Chamberlain's recent statement that he only referred to the line of conduct maintained by all civilised nations in similar circumstances, but thought that the "misunderstanding" was due to the English reports of the speech. It could not join in the demand that in the interests of the German army official steps should be taken against unofficial utterances of a foreign Minister. Other Berlin journals continued their denunciations of Mr. Chamberlain.

The polling for Galway took place. "Colonel" Arthur Lynch, the Nationalist candidate, was returned, receiving 1,247 votes against 473 recorded for Mr. Horace Plunkett.

Lord Kitchener reported that Commandant Buys had been captured after attacking a patrol of Railway Pioneers on the Vaal, near Villiersdorp. Minor British successes were reported from the Klerksdorp, Bethel, and Standerton districts. A Johannesburg telegram said that De Wet was alive and in good health, but was not accompanied by a large following.

FRIDAY, November 22.—Sir Robert Reid, speaking at Westminster on the war, said that our claim was for unconditional surrender in substance, so far as the form of government was concerned. If that was pressed war might go on for years. On the other side the claim was for independence. If that were insisted upon, from the temper of the people of this country it seemed to him also that war might go on for years. Something between unconditional surrender and independence had evidently been within the thoughts of leading minds upon both sides. Was it not a crime not to do our best if we could to attain such a settlement without further shedding of innocent blood? What was wanted was not merely that there should be negotiations; but that there should be negotiations in a different spirit and by different men. It was a work of mercy, of charity, and of wisdom, and every true lover of his country ought to lend a hand to put it forward if he could.

Reuter despatches from Pretoria furnished an account of the formation of volunteer burgher corps on the British side. A Reuter telegram from Johannesburg stated that a conspiracy had been discovered there, and about 20 arrests were made on Tuesday night, the conspiracy being thus nipped in the bud.

In consequence of disturbances got up by students and others in Athens in opposition to the translation of the New Testament into modern Greek, the Metropolitan, the chief of the "gendarmerie," and the Prefect of Police tendered their resignations.

Count Hatzfeldt, who for the past 16 years had been German Ambassador in London, and whose resignation on account of ill-health was announced not many days ago, died at the German Embassy. He was in his 71st year.

A clerk in the Bank of Liverpool, named Goudie, absconded yesterday, and, according to a statement issued by the manager, his defalcations amounted to £170,000, the whole of which he was supposed to have lost in betting transactions. A reward of £250 was offered for his apprehension.

SATURDAY, November 23.—The Duke of Devonshire at Eastbourne said the Boer leaders knew perfectly well that there was nothing which the Government of this country more desired than that all races in South Africa should, at the earliest possible moment, enjoy all the blessings of the freest and most liberal self-government under the British flag; but they would be false to the trust committed to them if, until the time had arrived when those free institutions could be safely conceded, they were to allow a state of things which would render possible a further recrudescence of hostilities or rebellion.

Speaking at Oldham, Mr. Asquith appealed to the Government to state the policy of this country in regard to the future of South Africa with unmistakeable clearness.

After a stormy debate in the Chamber in Athens in reference to the recent disturbances, the Ministry obtained a vote of confidence, though by only a small majority. As the agitation continued, the Cabinet tendered its resignation.

MONDAY, November 25.—A Cabinet Council was held at the Foreign Office.

Mr. Balfour was suffering from an attack of influenza. He was unable to attend the Cabinet Council, and a bulletin stated that he was unable to leave his bed, and could not hope to fulfil any engagements for at least a week.

Lord Kitchener, in a telegram of Saturday's date, gave fuller particulars of the action near Villiersdorp on November 20, in which Major Fisher was killed. It appeared that the whole party of Railway Pioneers, of which the major was in command, was captured by the Boers. Colonel Rimington's column came up an hour later, but the enemy, except a small rear-guard, had gone off, releasing the prisoners. Rimington's men captured Commandant Buys, who was wounded. A Reuter telegram from Pretoria stated that Colonel Rimington afterwards continued the pursuit of the enemy, and drove them south of the Vaal, capturing eight more prisoners.

Mr. Albert de Rutzen was appointed Chief Magistrate of the Metropolitan Police-courts, in the room of the late Sir F. Lushington.

Sir Thomas Lipton was entertained at a complimentary banquet in connexion with his recent attempt to win the America Cup.

M. Santos Dumont, the Brazilian aeronaut, was entertained at a banquet in London by the Aero Club of the United Kingdom.

TUESDAY, November 26.—Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman addressed a Liberal meeting at Lancaster. He said it was an idle slander to allege that Liberal speakers were responsible for the prolongation of the war. It was the Government themselves who were responsible for it. In this connexion he mentioned Lord Salisbury's statement that they would leave the Boers not a shred of independence and Mr. Chamberlain's insulting references to foreign nations, at a time when the chief hope of the Boers was to attract the sympathy or exhaust the patience of those nations. A still greater cause, Sir Henry said, was the spirit of subjugation which had been infused into the war. He believed the British people had no desire for the subjugation of the Boers, but until they made that known in an unmistakable manner the horizon in South Africa would grow blacker and blacker. Sir Henry also discussed what he termed the silly device of trying to stop obstruction by reducing the representation of Ireland in the House of Commons, and indicated his views as to the reform of Parliamentary procedure, stating that what was needed was devolution of business to municipalities and local Parliamentary bodies for the three kingdoms.

The Conference of the National Union of Conservative Associations was opened at Wolverhampton, and resolutions were adopted in regard to education, the Parliamentary representation of Ireland, and the war. Upon the last-named subject it was agreed that, "Seeing that many of the expenses caused by the war have been incurred for the benefit and were caused by the acts of the Transvaal and Orange Free State Governments, it is unjust that they should all be borne by the British taxpayer."

Lord Kitchener reported that since November 18 the columns had reported 23 Boers killed, 18 wounded, 230 prisoners, five surrenders, and the capture of 223 rifles, 14,100 rounds of ammunition, 98 wagons, and 4,600 cattle. Lord Kitchener briefly described the movements of the principal columns, and said that both in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony the blockhouse system was gradually being extended with success. Colonel Monro engaged Myburg last Friday near Barkly East, inflicting loss both in men and horses. Colonel Scobell was in close pursuit of Fouche between Dordrecht and Clifford, and had captured five of his men and 60 horses.

WEDNESDAY, November 27.—Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman speaking at Accrington denied that party distinctions no longer had any meaning. There would always be a deep diversity between those who were always disposed to go forward on the lines of progress and those who were disposed to look backward in regard to the past and to be timid in regard to the future.

The Marquis of Lansdowne, speaking at Darlington, said that representative government for the territories in South Africa would have to be reached by a gradual process of evolution. If the demand for independence meant—as he believed it did—that the Boers should be at liberty to act as they had done before, he would say with Lord Salisbury that

"not a shred of independence" should be given. It would be better to let the war be prolonged than that we should end it by a discreditable peace.

The Berlin correspondent of the "Times" stated there were numerous signs that the latest phase of the anti-British agitation was rapidly waning. Many of the newspapers deprecated the "indignation movement," and said that its effect had been to exhibit German public opinion in a light that could only give satisfaction to France and Russia.

MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI ON "THE CONDITION OF INDIA."

[From Our Own Reporter.]

On Tuesday evening last Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji delivered a highly interesting lecture upon "The Condition of India" to the members of the London branch of the Young Scots' Society, in the Board-room of the Society of Compositors, St. Bride Street, E.C. Mr. Thomas Adams (president) occupied the chair, and there was a good attendance of members.

Mr. Naoroji, who met with a very cordial reception, said that he could claim a very intimate connexion with Scotchmen, because two of his professors were Scotchmen, and his daughter had taken a medical degree at Edinburgh. (Applause.) Proceeding with his lecture, he said that there was a popular fallacy that England went to India to benefit that country, but that was not a reality by any means, for the British had gone there as traders. Soon after British merchants got to India the English became the rulers of the country, and the invasion of India commenced. Unlike former invasions, the perpetrators of which plundered the country and then retired with their booty, the British invasion was everlasting and unceasing. The wound which British rule had inflicted was still going on bleeding and running, and India was now suffering a triple loss of wealth, employment, and wisdom, a loss which no country in the world could stand for any length of time. (Hear, hear.) The result of this policy in India was a famine-stricken people, who were dying off by millions every year, no matter whether the harvest was good or bad. The condition of the large mass of the people was most deplorable, and although India formed part of the British Empire, the connexion was only held by a silken thread. Thousands of millions of pounds had been spent on wars to conquer India, but the British people never found a single shilling of the money, for every farthing of the cost was taken out of the Indian Empire. Although Indian blood had been spent in building up the British Empire, corruption and plunder were still rampant, and the severity of famines was increasing. In the early part of the last century the Indian Government found that there must be a limit, and British statesmen began to rule India a little more peaceably, for they saw that the system of government there was abominable. Consequently, in 1833, it was decided that Indians should be treated as British citizens, and not as British slaves, and an Act to accomplish this was passed. India took her share in the wave of humanitarianism which swept over the country at that period, and the Indian people were distinctly told that they would be governed upon the principle of British institutions, and there was to be no distinction of race, colour, or creed whatever in regard to employment in her Majesty's service. Up to the present day that Act had remained a dead letter, with the result that the cost of a very expensive civil and military service had been placed upon the shoulders of the poor people of India. Practically, this meant that 200,000,000 or 250,000,000 of rupees had to be provided by the Indian people before they could enjoy a single penny of their own produce. Most of this money was taken entirely out of the country and spent in England, and this was at the bottom of almost all their evils. Something like £10,000,000 or £15,000,000 came to this country every year in the shape of pensions and the like, and in this way India was constantly being bled, and this system deprived the people of the capacity of accumulating any capital. British capital went to India to exploit her resources and to employ Indian labour, but who benefited by this? Not the Indian people, but the British capitalists. Even a man like Lord Curzon boasted the other day that in India British capital had produced £12,000,000 from the gold mines, but where did all that wealth go to? Why, it was carried off by the British capitalists, and it was really a loss to India. Mr. Montgomery Martin, in the year 1835, came to the conclusion that India was the richest country one could wish for, but the Indian people were the poorest on the face of the earth. Since that period, the draining of the resources of India had continued and at the present time there was something like £30,000,000 worth of produce taken from the country every year under the present system of government. Even with all the boasted benefits of railways and British capital, famines in India were occurring every year. It was all very well for Lord George Hamilton to say that India was prosperous, but he could not understand how such a statement could be made when millions of the population were famine-stricken, and a great proportion of them were living on insufficient food. The great mass of the people of India were living on a scanty subsistence. How long was this state of things to continue? That was a question which every British gentleman ought to put to himself. Was this to be the return for the blood which India had spent for the formation of the British Empire? They had been told by the Secretary for India that India was prosperous and that it had great recuperative power, but he had not the patience to listen to such statements while the poor people were dying off like flies. (Shame!) The surplus which had just been announced was simply and solely the result of the recent currency legislation. The Legislative Councils of India were simply delusions and shams. Then, again, examinations for the Indian Civil Service ought not to take place only in England, but in India, and it was a great injustice to compel the Indian people to come over to this country in order to endeavour to enter the Indian Civil Service. After the Indian Mutiny, which cost India £40,000,000, another most solemn promise was made that the Indian people were to be treated exactly like the British, but this was never done, and the Act which was supposed to confer on India equality was as dead a letter to-day as it was when it was first passed. These promises had been constantly violated instead of being fulfilled. An Act had been passed allotting a certain number of appointments to Native Indians but it had never been put into force because of the opposition of the Anglo-Indians who wanted the appointments for their own children. If a great college was wanted in this country, it was very quickly erected, but if anything was wanted for India there was always a great deal of consideration necessary and that consideration generally went on until Doomsday without anything being done. The present Government of India was a Government of subterfuges and great promises but no performances. Was that state of things a credit to the British name after ruling India for 150 years? The Indian Government was alien and unsympathetic. British rule had created in India two Indias: (1) the India of the British, and, (2) the India of the Indians. Of course the former India was prosperous, but the latter was famine-stricken and starving. He appealed to Englishmen to insist upon the Government resuming the policy which was established in 1833 and which was again proclaimed in 1858, 1877, and 1887. The great hope of the Indian people was that they should aspire to British citizenship, and if they only got this equality, and the plundering of the resources of the country was put an end to, there would be no colony more loyal and ready to help the British nation in time of need. He appealed to them in conclusion to separate the romance from the reality in the system of governing India, and if they did this they would save their own country as well as India from a great calamity. (Applause.)

In reply to questions put by Messrs. Bruce, Marshall, and McIver, Mr. Naoroji gave a series of interesting explanations.

Upon the motion of Mr. Brown, a hearty vote of thanks was passed to the lecturer, which was acknowledged by Mr. Naoroji.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman concluded the proceedings.

THE BOMBAY LAND REVENUE AMENDMENT ACT.

LONDON INDIAN SOCIETY'S CONFERENCE.

[From Our Own Reporter.]

A Conference of Indians residing in the United Kingdom was held at 84, Palace Chambers, Westminster, on the afternoon of November 23, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji in the chair, the object being to adopt a Memorial to the Secretary of State for India in regard to the Bombay Land Revenue Amendment Act. Among those present were Messrs. R. C. Dutt, C.I.E., Martin Wood, J. M. Parikh, E. Hellier, O. P. Vaidya, H. L. Ahuja (vice-presidents), and N. B. Wagle and K. H. Singh (hon. secs.).

The Chairman called upon Mr. Dutt to move the first resolution, remarking that there was no one more competent to treat with the subject under debate than that gentleman.

Mr. Dutt moved:—"That this conference adopts this memorial, printed copies of which have been circulated, and requests Messrs. Naoroji, Dutt, and K. Harnam Singh, to forward the same to the Right Hon. Lord George Hamilton, M.P., Secretary of State for India in Council for his kind and careful consideration." He said that the memorial itself fully explained the object for which they were assembled. It began by describing the state of the cultivators of Bombay in the early days of British rule, as well as under the Mahratta rule, which obtained immediately prior to 1817. They were told that during the first four or five years after the Bombay Presidency came under British rule very able and well-disposed benevolent officers like the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone and Mr. Chaplin, who afterwards became Commissioner of the Deccan, went into the land question, and ascertained what was the status of the cultivators under the old Mahratta rule and extracts were given from their recorded opinions. The Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, who was Commissioner of the Deccan in 1818, submitted, in October, 1819, a long report on the territories conquered from the Peshwa, in the course of which he said:—"A large portion of the rayats are the proprietors of their estates, subject to the payment of a fixed land tax to Government," and that "their property is hereditary and saleable." Two years afterwards the whole question was gone into by the different Collectors in the Bombay Presidency, and Captain Robertson, the Collector of Poona in 1821, said the Bombay cultivator was "in no way inferior in point of tenure on its original basis as described in the quotation to the holder of the most undisputed freehold estate in England." Another Collector, Captain Pottinger, of Ahmadnagar, wrote in 1822: "The Mirasi tenure has existed in this part of India from time immemorial, and when I have asked about the period of its establishment, I have been told I might as well enquire when the soil was made." Again, Mr. Commissioner Chaplin, in his report in August, 1822, stated that "the Mirasi tenure is very general throughout the whole of that part of the conquered territory which extends from the Krishna to the range of Ghats which divides Gungterre from

Khandesh," and "a rayat having once acquired the hereditary right of occupancy, is together with his heirs entitled to hold it by sale, gift, or mortgage, and, according to the usage of the Deccan, without previously obtaining the permission of the Government." These extracts from reports, written by the ablest officials of the Bombay Presidency, were sufficient to prove that at the time the Peshwa dominions were annexed and came under British rule, the fixed tenants of the Bombay Presidency were possessed of the right of sale and mortgage of their inheritance, and paid a fixed land tax. The Mahratta Government, no doubt, from time to time imposed additional taxes to meet war and other expenses, but the land tax was a fixed tax. During the first years of British rule there were many experimental land settlements, failures more or less, but at last Captain Wingate and other officials who were employed to make a more satisfactory land settlement issued their joint Report in 1847. The principles advocated in that Report, and adopted by the Government, were, firstly, that separate settlements should be made with individual cultivators; secondly, that leases for thirty years should be substituted for the short leases which had preceded; and thirdly, that the estimated value of lands should be accepted as the basis of assessment. The heritable and transferable rights of the tenants were recognised, but the principle of a fixed land tax was abandoned in favour of a land tax to be settled at each recurring settlement. Thus the British Government accepted and continued the rights of inheritance and of sale and mortgage which the Bombay cultivator had previously possessed, but they discontinued the right of paying a fixed land tax. The Survey Officers fixed a new land tax according to their own judgment, and called upon the cultivator to accept his holding on condition of paying the tax, or in the alternative to give it up. While that settlement was still going on, the East India Company's Charter was under consideration, and in 1853 a Committee of the House of Commons held an enquiry into the Bombay Land Settlement, at which Mr. W. A. Goldfinch, one of the officers who had been working under Captain Wingate, was examined. He was asked the following question by Sir T. H. Maddock:—"After the survey was finished when you found a field—say No. 11—of five bigas of land in the possession of some particular person, did the Collector assess the revenue upon it arbitrarily, or did he ask the occupant or proprietor whether he was willing to pay the amount?" He answered: "The assessment was fixed by the Superintendent of the Survey, without any reference to the cultivator, and when those rates were introduced the holder of each field was summoned to the Collector, and informed of the rate at which his land would be assessed in future; and if he chose to retain it on those terms he did; if he did not choose, he threw it up." Thus it was clear that on the question of the land tax the cultivator was placed entirely at the mercy of the Survey Officer, and was not consulted at all. It was a contract between two parties—the Government and the cultivator—in regard to which one party had no chance of expressing an opinion, and in a case where a man had inherited land from his forefathers, dating back it might be for many generations, and even centuries, the land tax was assessed solely on the judgment of the Survey Officer, and the man's retention of his holding was made to depend on his willingness to pay the new tax; refusal, in fact, involved forfeiture of the land. The great fault of the system introduced by the British administrators in the forties and fifties was to be found in the arbitrary fixing of the land tax without consulting the views of the cultivators. It was acknowledged that the cultivators had certain rights of sale and mortgage, and that those rights passed with the transfer of the inheritance; the only thing that was not acknowledged was the right to a fixed land tax. Nine years later—in 1862—Lord Canning was Viceroy and Governor-General of India, and he caused an exhaustive enquiry to be made into the cause of the famine which desolated Northern India in 1860. Col. B. Smith conducted it, with the result that he came to the conclusion that, for the benefit of the people of India, it was necessary to fix a permanent limit to the land tax, so that, in future, addition to agricultural income might go to the people themselves and not be made the basis for additional taxation. Lord Canning thereupon consulted the Bombay and Madras Governments. The latter replied that their settlement was virtually permanent, as they did not ask for any increase in the land tax unless waste lands were brought into cultivation. On the other hand, the Bombay Government said they did not agree as to the propriety of a fixed land tax, as prices of food were going up and there was no reason why the Government should not increase its taxation accordingly. These were the words of the Bombay Governor:—"As the prices of the produce are yearly increasing, I see no infringement of the original conditions of the settlement, nor will such be felt by the rayat, if on the expiration of this experimental settlement the Government land tax should be re-adjusted according to those increased prices, and to other circumstances." Lord Canning's proposal for a permanent settlement received the support of both Lord Halifax and Sir Stafford Northcote, and had Lord Canning lived five years after his retirement no doubt the people of India would have got a permanent settlement. But, unfortunately, he died shortly after his retirement. The question consequently hung fire for about 20 years, and at last, in 1883, the proposal was absolutely rejected. About that time the Marquis of Ripon was Viceroy of India, and he, finding that Lord Canning's proposal was not likely to be sanctioned, made another suggestion, giving some sort of security to the cultivators of India against an unreasonable increase in the revenues. He suggested that in all districts which had once been surveyed and settled, there should not be any increase in the land tax except on the ground of an increase in prices. That proposal, which was rejected by the Bombay Government, was accepted by the Madras Government, and for a year or two was acted upon, but Lord Ripon having retired from India in 1884 it was vetoed by the India Office in 1885. That brought them back to the old state of things; the cultivators had absolutely no voice in fixing the land tax; there was no appeal from the decision of the Survey Officers—who he was willing to admit were experienced, considerate men—and the contract was altogether one-sided. What had been the result of this state of things which existed up to last year? The land tax had gone on increasing, and it had been estimated that in the survey commenced in 1836, the revenue increased 32 per cent.; in that commenced in 1866 it went up 30 per cent., and so far as the 1896 survey had proceeded there had been a further increase of 30 per cent. These continuous increases necessarily left the cultivators poorer after each settlement. They would all remember the opinion expressed by the late Sir William Hunter that the difficulty of improving the condition of the cultivator of Bombay was attributable to the fact that the land tax was so heavy as not to leave the cultivator sufficient money to support his family and himself for twelve months, and no doubt most of them had read the report in which Sir A. MacDonnell's Commission declared that in some places the land tax was so "full" that its rigorous collection necessarily drove the cultivator into debt, and put him under the thraldom of the money-lender. What was the remedy for this state of things? It was to make enquiry into the circumstances of the land tax and to reduce it where it is too heavy. That had been urged from time to time, but so far no enquiry had been held. The Government claimed that their desire was to rescue the cultivator from the thraldom of the money-lender, but they had adopted the wrong remedy. They were taking power in the Act, to which the memorial took exception, to withdraw from the cultivator his ancient right of holding his fields in perpetuity, as recognised under the old Mahratta rule, and under British rule from 1835 to 1890. The Hon. Mr. Mehta, speaking before the Bombay Council, thus described that right: "The combined operation of Sections 68 and 73 shows that every occupant of land has an heritable and transferable right in it, and if the Survey Settlement is applied to that land the occupant is entitled to the use and occupation in perpetuity. It is impossible to explain away the final words of Section 73—'the right of occupancy shall be deemed an heritable and transferable property, etc., and shall immediately pass to the person whose agreement to become occupant shall have been accepted by the Collector.' The last words would never have been allowed to form part of the Act unless it was deliberately intended to render impossible annual or short term tenancies of land brought under settlement. My hon. friend (Mr. Monteath) has told us a great deal in his speech about individual existing occupants and their vested rights and interests. But he quietly gives go-by to the fact that, leaving individual occupants alone, the effect of Section 73 is to permanently impress the land with occupancy rights, the tenure in perpetuity being the most essential in them. Individuals may hold and individuals may relinquish it, but the land itself can be held only, whenever held by a tenure, in perpetuity. It is this deliberate character impressed upon the land that this Bill is framed to destroy." Under the system which existed in Bombay before 1901, certain rights attached to the land itself. It was the same system as prevailed in Bengal, where the rights attached to the estate and not to the proprietor, and where, when an estate was sold, the purchaser acquired it subject to the payment of the old land tax. The same principle obtained, too, in England. Under this Bill the Government, however, were taking power to confiscate the right of inheritance and transfer. What were the words of Mr. Monteath in regard to this proposal? "There are strong reasons for believing that it was not the intention of the Code to deprive the Government of the power to grant land on special terms in special cases" Surely, if the Government only proposed to apply this new power to special cases, that would be an infringement of the right. But the special cases were not even indicated in the Act itself, and that was one of its vital defects. It might be necessary, for political reasons, to restrict the right of sale, mortgage, or inheritance, in the case of certain hill tribes, but the Bill would enable the power to be exercised wherever the Bombay Government liked in the Presidency. No doubt there was no intention to apply it universally, but surely a limit should be placed in the Act itself. Their objections to the Act then were: Firstly, that it confiscated a right which existed under the Mahratta rule and which had been respected under British rule for 70 or 80 years, and for the withdrawal of which there was no sufficient justification; and, Secondly, that the Act was too vague, enabling as it did the Government to withdraw the right in any part of the Presidency without giving any details or assigning any reasons. The memorialists, therefore, asked the Secretary of State to veto the Act, or at any rate to exclude from its operation all lands to which the Survey Settlement had been extended, and in which, therefore, the heritable, transferable, and perpetual right of the cultivator has already been recognised by British legislation, believing as they did that the effect of the Bill would be to deepen agricultural distress and create a political danger. (Cheers.)

Mr. Gadgil seconded the resolution. Reasonable men, he said, looked upon this piece of legislation as a defective and retrograde step. It would not achieve the object which the Government professed to have in view; it would not improve the position of the poor down-trodden agriculturist of the Bombay Presidency, but pernicious results were bound to follow from it. It was a small piece of legislation, but it had created great consternation throughout the Presidency. He particularly desired to direct their attention to Section 68, which read:—

"Provided that nothing in this or any other Section shall make it, or shall be deemed ever to have made it, unlawful for the Collector at any time to grant permission to any person to occupy any unalienated unoccupied land, for such period, and on such conditions as he may, subject to the orders of the Government, prescribe, and in any such case the occupancy shall, whether a survey settlement has been extended to the land or not, be held

only for the period, and subject to the conditions so prescribed." Now, until this Act was passed by the Bombay Government, a tenant, immediately he entered into possession of a piece of land, became entitled to all the rights attaching to it in perpetuity, but the effect of Section 68, read with Section 73, would be to make the cultivator absolutely dependent on the will of the Collector, who would impose his own conditions and make the tenure for any period he pleased—short or long. This was a very large power indeed. What were the reasons advanced by the Government for making this change? It was alleged that they desired to prevent the cultivator being overburdened and falling into the hands of the money-lender, who was said to have brought him into his present distressful condition. But how was it proposed to do it? They took away from the agriculturist the power to transfer or mortgage his piece of land, which he held in perpetuity; the money-lender would consequently refuse to lend him any money because the security was gone and the man would become absolutely dependent on the Government even for his living, for failure to pay the land tax would lead to forfeiture, and the land would only be re-granted on entirely new conditions. They were told by Mr. Monteath that the occupants on the restricted tenure would have the same right of holding in perpetuity as other occupants and the guarantee of the survey assessment would be as binding in their case as in any other case. That in itself was a very good assurance, but what was there to prevent any future officer of the Bombay Government giving full force to the Act irrespective of that assurance? What was desirable was to make the Act thoroughly explicit. (Hear.) He would especially like to draw their attention to the first sentence of Section 68. That gave retrospective effect to the Act. Then again Section 73 gave absolute power to the authorities to deal with the proprietary rights of the cultivators, and he ventured to urge in conclusion that the general effect of the Act would be to detract from the desire of the occupant of the land to improve the soil, because he would never be sure that his descendants would be allowed to benefit by his improvements.

Mr. Vaidya said that undoubtedly the Bombay holders were hampered by their indebtedness, but it was curious that the Government should take this opportunity of introducing fresh legislation calculated to make their position worse. He did not think the Act would remove the evil at which it was aimed. He looked upon it as a suicidal policy, and regretted to say that it was only another illustration of the tendency of the Government, whenever it dealt with the land question, to further restrict the rights of the land owners. If they wanted to deal with the money-lending evil, let them put some limit on the operations of the money-lending classes.

Mr. J. M. Parikh said that the new Act gave the Government complete dominion over the land which they had never before possessed. The indirect effect of the legislation was to legalise the position of the Government as absolute owner of the land in the Bombay Presidency, and it constituted a deprivation of the rights of the occupants for the time being without any compensation whatever. They were promised that the Act should not be applied at random, but they wanted a clear statement in it of the intentions of the Government, so that in the future the evils which they feared might not be brought about. The past history of the British administration in India did not give them confidence that the promises now made would be fulfilled, and hence the necessity for clearly limiting the operation of the Act. Collectors were bound to fill the coffers of the Treasury as completely as possible, and in the days to come the Act would be construed not according to the utterances of Mr. Monteath but by the canons of statute law.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously, and the proceedings closed with hearty votes of thanks to Mr. Naoroji and Mr. Dutt, proposed by Mr. Ahuja and seconded by Mr. Patker.

TEXT OF THE MEMORIAL.

The text of the Memorial is as follows:—

To the Right Honble. Lord George Hamilton, Secretary of State for India.

My Lord,—We, the undersigned, have been empowered at a Conference held on November 23, 1901, to submit to your Lordship in Council this Memorial on the subject of the Bombay Land Revenue Code Amendment Act, known as Bombay Act VI of 1901, which received the assent of His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India on the 24th September, 1901.

2.—We desire, at the commencement, to submit to your Lordship that the Bombay cultivator's right of inheritance, sale, and mortgage, with regard to his holding, is an ancient right, and is not a creation of British legislation. The dominions of the last Mahratta Peshwa were annexed by the British Government in 1817, and two years after, the Honble. Mountstuart Elphinstone wrote thus in his "Report on the Territories conquered from the Peshwa," submitted in October, 1819:—

"A large portion of the rayats are the proprietors of their estates, subject to the payment of a fixed land tax to Government; that their property is hereditary and saleable, and they are never dispossessed while they pay their tax, and even then they have for a long period (at least thirty years) the right of reclaiming their estate, on paying the dues of Government. Their land tax is fixed, but the late Mahratta Government loaded it with other impositions."

3.—Captain Robertson, who was Collector of Poona in 1821, bore his testimony to the rights of the Mirasi or hereditary cultivator in the following terms:—

"He is in no way inferior in point of tenure on its original basis, as described in the quotation, to the holder of the most undisputed freehold estate in England." "The ancestors of many of the present occupants of the lands of the Deccan were probably holders of land antecedent to the Mussalman conquest of the country, on condition of paying a 'reddendum' equal to a sixth part of the produce." "Every original paper relating to Thalkaris [Mirasi tenants] and their occupation of the land, every return I have obtained from the districts concerning them and the ancient distribution of land, proves beyond a shadow of doubt that at a former time the whole of the arable land of each village was apportioned out among a certain number of families." "Their descendants collectively are termed a Jutha; they are inferred to possess the whole of the original estate among them; they are responsible as a body corporate for the payment of whatever is due to Government." Captain Robertson also showed that the Mirasi tenure was heritable and transferable, and existed in all villages in Poona district.

4.—Captain Pottinger, the Collector of Ahmadnagar, wrote in 1822 that the Mirasi tenants "can dispose of or mortgage their lands when they like." "The Mirasi tenure has existed in this part of India from time immemorial; and when I have asked about the period of its establishment, I have been told I might as well enquire when the soil was made."

5.—These and other reports were enclosed by Mr. Commissioner Chaplin in his exhaustive and famous report of the 20th August, 1822. And with regard to the Mirasi tenure he recorded that it "is very general throughout the whole of that part of the conquered territory which extends from the Krishna to the range of Ghats which divides Gungterre from Khandesh." "A rayat having once acquired the hereditary right of occupancy is, together with his heirs, entitled to hold it by sale, gift, or mortgage, and according to the usage of the Deccan, without previously obtaining the permission of the Government." A Mirasdar "has a voice in all the village councils, has a right of pasture on the village commons, can build a house or dispose of it by sale." "The Collector [of Poona] is very properly an advocate for preserving the rights of Mirasdars, a line of policy which he strenuously recommends in several places; but as nobody, I trust, has ever thought of invading their rights, the discussion of the question at any length would be superfluous."

6.—We have made these extracts from the reports of the first five years after the Mahratta dominions came under the British rule, in order to show the position of the majority of the cultivators under the old Mahratta rule. It is too often assumed that the cultivators had no heritable and transferable rights under the old régime; that their heritable and transferable rights were the creation of British legislation. The extracts we have made will show that the very opposite of this is the truth. Laws were not passed by Legislative Councils, nor recorded in published Acts under the Hindu rule, but were embodied in the customs and usages of the land, which were more durable and less variable than the Acts and Laws of modern times. And the testimony of Elphinstone, Robertson, Pottinger, and Chaplin, quoted above, will show that the usages and customs of the land recognised the right of inheritance and transfer in the Bombay cultivator, and also respected his right to hold his land on payment of a fixed land tax.

7.—The Government of Bombay, after many experimental land settlements, at last based their policy on the famous Joint Report of 1847. The principles advocated in this Report, and adopted by the Government, were, firstly, that separate settlements should be made with individual cultivators; secondly, that leases for thirty years should be substituted for the short leases which had preceded; thirdly, that the estimated value of lands should be accepted as the basis of assessment. The heritable and transferable rights of the tenants were recognised, but the principle of a fixed land tax was abandoned in favour of a land tax to be settled at each recurring settlement.

8.—From that date, the heritable and transferable rights of the Bombay cultivators have been uniformly recognised up to the present year. In the Bombay Land Revenue Code of 1879 (Bombay Act V of 1879), Section 68, runs thus:—

"An occupant is entitled to the use and occupation of his land for the period, if any, to which his occupancy is limited, or if the period is unlimited, or a survey settlement has been extended to the land, in perpetuity conditionally on the payment of the amounts due on account of the land revenue for the same, according to the provisions of this Act, or of any rules made under this Act, or of any other law for the time being in force, or on the fulfilment of any other terms lawfully annexed to his occupancy."

And Section 73 runs thus:—

"The right of occupancy shall be deemed an heritable and transferable property, subject to the provisions contained in Section 56, or otherwise prescribed by the law, and shall immediately pass to the person whose agreement to become occupant shall have been accepted by the Collector."

9.—Thus stood the law in 1879. The law of 1901 empowers the Bombay Government to extinguish at its pleasure these ancient and customary rights of the cultivators, hitherto recognised by British legislation.

In Section 68, the following Proviso has been added by the new Act:—

"Provided that nothing in this or any other Section shall make it, or shall be deemed ever to have made it, unlawful for the Collector at any time to grant permission to any person to occupy any unalienated unoccupied land, for such period, and on such conditions as he may, subject to the orders of Government, prescribe, and in any such case the occupancy shall, *whether a survey settlement has been extended to the land or not*, be held only for the period and subject to the conditions so prescribed."

And after Section 73, the following new Section has been added by the new Act:—

"(1.) Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing Section, in any tract or village to which Government may, by Notification published before the introduction therein of an original survey

settlement under Section 103, declare the provisions of this Section applicable, *the occupancy or interest of the occupant in the land shall not after the date of such Notification be transferable without the previous sanction of the Collector*.

"(2.) Government may, by Notification in the 'Bombay Gazette,' from time to time exempt any part of such tract or village, or any person or class of persons, from the operation of this Section."

10.—The italics in the foregoing two paragraphs are our own, and indicate the principal changes introduced by the new Act. The new Act empowers the Government

(1) to abolish the tenant's right "in perpetuity" in tenures to which the survey settlement had been extended, and empowers it to make temporary settlements;

(2) to restrict the right of transfer hitherto recognised in all tenants of lands to which the survey settlement had been extended.

11.—We do not believe that it is the intention of the Indian Government to confiscate tenant rights which are based on the ancient customs of India, and which have been recognised by British rulers and by British legislation for more than two generations. It is intended, as we learn from the assurances of the Bombay Government, to exercise the power taken by the Government only in exceptional cases. The fatal defect of the Act just passed is that it does not indicate these exceptional cases. It empowers the Bombay Government to withdraw old and legalised rights by a simple Notification, i.e., by a simple exercise of the executive power of the Government. It invests the Bombay Government with a more unlimited power in this respect than is possessed or claimed by the Government of any Province in India. Laws are made to indicate, as nearly as possible, the powers which they vest in the Executive, and the rights which they assure to the people; and the Land Revenue Codes of other Provinces of India and the Rent Laws of Bengal have been framed on this plan. Laws which vest in the Executive unlimited powers to extinguish or to preserve tenant rights fail in their primary object, and have hitherto been unknown in India.

12.—It is remembered in Bombay that the rights of holding land "in perpetuity" and of sale and transfer were legally conferred by the British Government on tenants as substitutes for the same rights which they enjoyed previous to the British rule, and which were observed and recorded by Elphinstone and Chaplin. It is politically unwise now to withdraw the legal assurance to these ancient rights, and to make them dependent on the will of the Executive. It is politically unwise to empower the Executive to preserve or to extinguish those tenant rights which have been customary in Western India for centuries, and which have hitherto been legally recognised by the British Government.

13.—No laws made by British rulers in India affect the interests and the lives of the great mass of the Indian population more intimately than the laws relating to tenant rights. The laws attaching certain rights to survey tenures in Bombay have been keenly appreciated by millions of cultivators in that Province, and these rights have been recognised since the dawn of British rule. The new Act making these rights dependent in the future on the will of the Executive has created alarm and consternation. There has been a strong, unanimous, and vehement opposition against the new Act on the part of the Indian public such has never before been witnessed in Bombay. To keep the Act on the Statute Book will create a feeling of unrest among the agricultural population of Bombay.

14.—We therefore pray that your Lordship, in Council, will, after due consideration, veto the Act which has lately received the sanction of the Indian Government. In any case we trust and hope that your Lordship will exclude from the operation of the Act all lands to which the survey settlement has been extended, and in which, therefore, the heritable, transferable, and perpetual right of the cultivator has already been recognised by British legislation.

We have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servants.

The Memorial was signed by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Romesh Dutt, and Mr. K. Harnam Singh, on behalf of the Conference.

MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI IN SCOTLAND.

LECTURE AT DUNFERMLINE.

We take the following from the "Dunfermline Press" of Saturday, November 16:—

Under the auspices of the Dunfermline branch of the Young Scots Society, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, ex-M.P. for Central Finsbury, delivered a public lecture in St. Margaret's Lecture Hall, Dunfermline, on Thursday evening, on "The Condition of India." Mr. John D. Hope, M.P. for West Fife, presided. There was a large attendance, the hall being filled.

The CHAIRMAN congratulated Dunfermline on the formation of a branch of the Young Scots Society. The Society, he said, was having an educative influence all over the country. They were met to hear Mr. Naoroji speak to them on India. Little consideration was given to India just now. The majority of the public were as indifferent to the famines in India as they were to the cry of the children dying in the concentration camps in South Africa at the rate of 250 per 1,000. And yet the problem of India was one of the greatest and gravest. (Hear, hear.) Miss Florence Nightingale once wrote:—"We do not care for the people of India. The saddest sight to be seen in the East is the peasant of our Eastern Empire." That was as true to-day as ever. In India, from time immemorial, the cultivators of the soil had been ground down by oppressions and exactions into a condition of helpless, hopeless poverty, and this must inevitably result, at no distant date, in widespread catastrophy. The peasantry worked for 2½d. a day. The famines could not be traced to sterile soil or bad climate. India was like a great estate owned by an absentee landlord. India had an expensive military and civil establishment, managed and officered by Englishmen, and about thirty millions a year were drained away to this country to pay pensions and home charges of the Government. The whole country was subjected to a steady and exhausting drain which, combined with the enormous expense of the Government, was making the population year by year poorer. (Shame.) The taxes were so high, and collected so relentlessly, that half-starved peasants were driven into the clutches of local money-lenders. On salt, an article of especial necessity where the food is vegetable, an enormous tax was levied. If cultivators of the soil could only retain their little capital, and could be released from the drain which reduced them even in non-famine times to the verge of starvation, industry would revive, and the country could maintain not only the present population, but a far greater one. The population of India is not nearly so dense as Holland or this country, there being only 186 to the square mile, while it was 450 in Holland, and 500 in this country. The real cause of want in India was not the niggardliness of Nature, but the rapacity of man. (Hear, hear.) They were privileged that night to meet to hear an address from a veteran Indian statesman—one who knew the people of that vast country, and was intimately acquainted with their wants and aspirations. Six years ago Central Finsbury, to its disgrace, rejected Mr. Naoroji as its Parliamentary representative. His absence and Sir William Wedderburn's absence from Parliament were a great loss both to our country and to the millions of India whose interests they had at heart, and whose welfare these gentlemen had so earnestly striven to promote. (Applause.)

Mr. NAOROJI, who was cordially received, took occasion to remark on his connexion with Scotland through the Elphinstone School and College, and his early Scottish teachers. With regard to the condition of India, he had no complaint against any individual official. The system of Government began badly, and had continued badly up to the present day. India had had foreign invaders in past times, but the invasions came to an end. But there had been from the time the British obtained a political position a never-ceasing foreign invasion. Not only was the wealth of the Indians carried away, but their employment was taken away, experience and wisdom were all lost to them, and they were deteriorating and sinking intellectually, morally, and physically. The British public had done its duty so far as to lay down a policy, and that policy was everything they could desire; but the Governments to whom the British public had entrusted the destiny of India had violated that policy in every way. The blame ultimately came against the British public, because the Governments were its agents. (Hear, hear.) It was all very well for the Anglo-Indians interested in the matter to represent a picture of beneficence, and show that they were giving law and order and peace. What was the result? Over three-fourths of the people were born wretched, lived a wretched life, and died miserable—in peace and order. (Hear, hear.) It was mostly with Indian blood, and entirely with Indian money, that the British Empire in India was formed, but Indians were treated as beasts of burden. India had a great military service put upon her back, and a great civil service. India could supply them with an army powerful enough to oppose any aggression, and, he did not hesitate to say, to send Russia back to St. Petersburg. (Applause.) But Britain would not trust India. (Hear, hear.) The Mutiny was not a revolt of the people of India; it was a revolt of soldiers in the service of Britain. But, notwithstanding that it was British fault, notwithstanding that it was with Indian blood that Britain regained her power, Britain made India pay every farthing of the expenditure. That was the reward they got for not joining the revolt. Mr. Naoroji proceeded to enumerate the promises of the past Mutiny proclamation, and to charge the British Governments with having acted dishonourably in neglecting the promises. India had to find something like 200 to 250 millions of rupees to give to Government before the Indians could use a single ounce of their own produce for themselves. Indians had no means of developing their resources or taking advantage of the peace which came to them. Their money was taken away, and some portion of it was brought back as British capital to exploit the country and take away the produce, with the result that every year India must produce something like thirty or forty millions worth of produce to give up to the British to take to Britain. Famines were becoming more frequent. They were told drought could not be helped, but they never had famines in this country because they had the means of buying food from every part of the world. He denied that India had constitutional government. They were told they had a share in passing the laws made by the Executive Councils. Nothing could be more delusive. There was a complete overwhelming majority of Government with which they could not contend in any way; the only business of the few Indians on these Councils was to help in taxing the people. The Government might spend their money as it liked, and they had no voice in the matter; that was the British citizenship they were enjoying at British hands. (Applause.)

The Rev. T. E. MILLER proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Naoroji for his interesting and instructive lecture.

Mr. T. GORRIE, President of the Society, briefly addressed the meeting on the advantages likely to be gained through being connected with the Society.

Mr. WM. ROBERTSON proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, and a very successful meeting then terminated.

THE INDIAN FAMINE COMMISSION AND THE FAMINE UNION.

[From the "Speaker," November 23.]

Why does the India Office suppress the report of the last Famine Commission? The Commission, which consisted of Sir Antony MacDonnell and three colleagues, all of them officials and only one an Indian, was appointed last December. The report was signed at Naini Tal on May 8, and, although it has to some extent been made public in India, together with the resolution of the Government of India concerning it, it has not yet been issued in the form of a Blue-book. The reason, or the excuse, for this protracted delay is not quite obvious. At first it was said that the report was being withheld in order that the Government of Bombay might rush into law a measure which would meet in advance some of the criticisms of the Commission upon the land revenue system of the Bombay Presidency. But that pretext, if it was ever seriously held, no longer exists. The bill to amend, or at least to change, the Bombay Land Revenue Code has now been enacted, amid the opposition of the Bombay public. Nor will it be suggested that the report of an Indian Famine Commission has no interest for the public at home. To that suggestion, if it were made, there would be at least two answers: one is the liberality with which the British public has contributed to the relief funds; another is the insight with which non-official observers have detected flaws in the relief system and gaps in the machinery of preventive measures. Nothing in the report of the Commission is more remarkable than its repeated endorsement of non-official criticisms and suggestions emanating alike from India and from this country. The report consists of two sections, dealing respectively with the two main problems which famine suggests—namely, (1) How is famine to be prevented? and (2) How, when it comes, is it to be relieved? Of these questions it is obvious that the first is more important than the second. If prevention is better than cure, it is far better than mitigation. Nor is it merely that the question of prevention is more fundamental; it is also the ground which has been less explored, while the labours of successive Famine Commissions have gradually brought the relief system into a level of tolerable efficiency.

Nevertheless, for some mysterious reason, which the Government only knows, Sir Antony MacDonnell's Commission was appointed to enquire into the second question and not the first. The resolution appointing the Commission set out in minute detail the various issues which were to be examined in relation to the relief system. To see how the relief system worked, and how, if at all, it might be improved, was the chief, and almost the sole, task to which Sir Antony and his colleagues were invited. But in a kind of postscript to the resolution the Government of India was good enough to add these words: "The Commission will not be precluded from recording any recommendations or opinions which it is thought may be of use either in anticipation or in treatment of future famines." This was not exactly an instruction to grapple with the problem of prevention. Measures in anticipation are not the same as preventive measures. But the Commission had the good sense to put a generous interpretation upon this hesitating and half-hearted suggestion, and by far the most valuable part of its report is the section devoted to "protective measures." To do justice to either section of the report would require some space. But it may be said in general terms that, so far as the relief system is concerned, the Commission concurs with non-official critics, both English and Indian, in recommending better preparation for famine, more use of non-official help, early and liberal advances for wells and other village improvements, the abolition of the "distance test" and, indeed, of all tests but the labour test, the prompt distribution of gratuitous relief, more use of village works, the abolition of fines and the "penal minimum," better establishment, better and more numerous hospital assistants, an increase of railway rolling-stock for the carriage of fodder, and more wisdom and promptness in remissions and suspensions of land revenue and advances to cultivators. A few passages from the report of the Commissioners may well be cited. "In no province," they say, "were well-considered programmes of public or village works ready at the beginning of the famine." Again, "it would be easy to multiply instances in which the policy of the local government was hampered or the administration was diverted from its proper course by the insufficiency of establishments." "The want of tools was felt at the outset not less than the want of establishment." "We were struck by the little use made of non-official agency in every province in the recent famine." With reference to gratuitous relief, they report: "We were struck by the failure of the local officers in Bombay to take the action in this respect which the code and the orders of the Government required—a failure which was one cause of the great mortality in Gujerat." And of the need of preparing schemes of relief works in advance, the Commissioners say: "We believe that had such a scheme been in reserve in Gujerat, for instance, much of the panic and some of the mortality would have been avoided."

Of the more doubtful recommendations of the Commission—such as the proposal of a strict system of piece-work—it is not necessary to speak. But it would not be easy to exaggerate the value of the recommendations made under the head of "protective measures." The most important of them call for greater elasticity in the revenue demands made on the cultivator, regular suspensions and remissions of revenue as a preventive measure in bad years, the foundation of agricultural banks, generous advances under the Agricultural Loans Act, various measures, both executive and legislative, to deal with indebtedness in Bombay (including the elasticity in the collection of the Government demand and a reformed system of land records), and, last, but by no means least, the development of irrigation. "Railway construction," the report says, "has played its part in the policy of famine insurance," and the Commissioners express "cordial approval of a new departure in famine policy which would place irrigation works in the place that protective railways have hitherto occupied in the famine insurance programme." Very drastic indeed is the Commission's criticism of the land revenue policy of the Bombay Government, nor is the ground of criticism removed by the measure recently hurried into law. "The policy of the Bombay Government," the report says, "in regard to the collection of land revenue is stricter than that of any other Government in India." Its action in the matter of suspensions of revenue is found to be "directly in conflict with the principles which we consider to be vital in times of famine." Of the pressure of the land revenue in the Deccan districts the Commissioners write:—

> We have no doubt that it cannot be collected in short years without forcing the rayats into debt.

And of agricultural banks the Commissioners say:—

> We attach the highest importance to the establishment of some organisation or method whereby cultivators may obtain without paying usurious rates of interest and without being given undue facilities for incurring debt, the advances necessary for carrying on their business.

It will be admitted that these are important recommendations, and if the authorities show no great alacrity in giving effect to them it may be hoped that public opinion will provide the necessary stimulus. What is now wanted is a further enquiry which will take up the matter at the point where Sir Antony MacDonnell's Commission, hampered by narrow terms of reference, had to leave it. Such enquiry has been asked for on many occasions in the House of Commons, and the Secretary for India has admitted the need. "I agree," said Lord George Hamilton, in the midst of the famine of 1897 (House of Commons, January 26, 1897), "I agree that the opportunity this famine affords ought not to be allowed to pass without our taking every opportunity to enquire into and ascertain the best methods of protecting the people of India from the recurrence of similar calamities." Lord George Hamilton, in that passage, contemplated an enquiry having special reference to the problem of prevention. No such enquiry has been held. Yet it is interesting to note that the resolution appointing the Commission which has just reported contained words that suggested a supplementary enquiry. "It would be manifestly undesirable," the resolution observed, "to postpone the labours of the present Commission" until it was definitely known whether further enquiry should be undertaken. The lines upon which this further enquiry should proceed have, it may be suggested, been well marked out by the Indian Famine Union, recently formed upon a non-political basis under the chairmanship of Mr. Leonard Courtney. Sir Antony MacDonnell and his colleagues have carried the investigation down as far as the indebtedness of the cultivator. The Famine Union, in the memorial which is shortly to be presented to the Secretary of State, prays for detailed enquiry into the economic condition of a limited number of selected villages, with the view of ascertaining the exact financial position of each cultivator and the history and causes of his difficulties. It is suggested that "in each province the local administration should select typical villages, and appoint suitable persons, including officials and non-officials, Europeans and Indians," to conduct this investigation. Could any proposal be more opportune?

G. H.

JUST PUBLISHED. Crown 8vo, 5s.

LAST ESSAYS.

SECOND SERIES.

ESSAYS ON THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION.

BY THE RIGHT HON. F. MAX MÜLLER, K.M.

CONTENTS.—Forgotten Bibles (1884)—Ancient Prayers—Indian Fables and Esoteric Buddhism (1893)—The Alleged Sojourn of Christ in India (1894)—The Kutho-Daw (1895)—Buddha's Birth Place (1898)—Mohammedanism and Christianity (1894)—The Religions of China (1900):—1. Confucianism; 2. Taoism; 3. Buddhism and Christianity—The Parliament of Religions at Chicago (1894)—Why I am not an Agnostic (1894)—Is Man Immortal?

LONDON: LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.

"INDIA," JAN.-JUNE, 1901.

VOL. XV.

NOW READY. **Bound in Cloth (post free) 7/6 each net cash.**

The following volumes of "INDIA," bound in cloth, can also be obtained:—

Vols. V. (1894), VI. (1895), VII. (1896), VIII. (1897). Price 8/6 each, post free.

Vols. IX. (Jan.-June, 1898), X. (July-Dec., 1898), XI. (Jan.-June, 1899), XII. (July-Dec., 1899). XIII. (Jan-June, 1900). XIV. (July-Dec., 1900). Price 7/6 each, post free.

Remittances should accompany order.

Apply to the Manager, "INDIA," 84 & 85, PALACE CHAMBERS, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

LEGAL EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.

Full particulars of the course of study and of the cost of living, etc., etc., will be forwarded on the receipt of 8 one anna stamps, by Mr. J. M. PARIKH,
1, CLOISTERS, TEMPLE, LONDON, E.C.

"THE PEOPLE OF INDIA: Their Many Merits by Many who have Known Them."

Mr. Alfred Webb's articles reprinted in pamphlet form from "INDIA."

A copy will be sent free on receipt of 1d. stamp to cover postage. Secretaries of Political Associations, Clubs, Literary Societies, in the United Kingdom may obtain copies for distribution on application.

BRITISH COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, 84 & 85, PALACE CHAMBERS, WESTMINSTER, S.W

Europeans resident in India desiring copies should send ½ anna stamp to

MR. HARICHANDRA A. TALCHERKAR, 52, Veronica Street, Bandra, Bombay.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

"INDIA," 1902.

"INDIA" will be forwarded only to persons in respect of whom subscriptions have been actually received at the London office. To this rule there will be no exception.

In order to obtain every number published during 1902 it is necessary that the name of the Subscriber and his Subscription should be received in London before December 31, 1901, as back numbers will not be stocked. New names will be added as received, but no back numbers can be obtained.

Do you want to know by every mail what has been done in Parliament concerning India?

Do you want to see Special Reports of Public Meetings in England concerning India?

Do you want to read what the British Press is writing about India?

—— The Journal "INDIA" will tell you.

The Subscription, including postage direct to the Subscriber, will be at the rate of **Eight Rupees per Annum, Four Rupees Eight Annas per Half Year,** or **Two Rupees Eight Annas per Quarter.**

ORDER FORM FOR USE OF SUBSCRIBERS.

Please fill in this form, and send direct to the London Office with a Post Office Money Order for **Eight Rupees,** made payable to W. DOUGLAS HALL, and crossed ______ & Co.

To the Manager of "INDIA," 84 & 85, PALACE CHAMBERS, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.

Please send me the weekly "INDIA" during 1902.

Write distinctly. *Name* ______________________

Address ______________________

for which is remitted the sum of Eight Rupees (Rs. 8/-/-).

Printed by A. BONNER, 1 & 2, Took's Court, London, E.C., and Published for the Proprietors at 84 and 85, Palace Chambers, Westminster, S.W.